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NEWS SUMMARY:

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**Green Bay Used Car Dealer Thao Bee Yang Sentenced to Six Months
Imprisonment for Odometer Tampering**

Steven M. Biskupic, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, announced that Thao Bee Yang (36) of Green Bay, was sentenced in federal court yesterday to 6 months in prison for the crime of odometer tampering. United States District Judge William Griesbach also sentenced Yang to a term of one year of supervised release, and ordered him to pay restitution.

Thao Bee Yang, also known as “Bee” Yang, bought and sold used vehicles under the business names “Easy Auto Sales” and “Bee’s Auto Sales.” Both businesses were located in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Following a two-day trial in August of 2008, Yang was convicted of a single count of odometer-tampering, in violation of 49 U.S.C. § 32703(2). In sentencing Yang, Judge Griesbach found that, between early 2002 and mid-2004, Yang intentionally caused the odometer readings of a significant number of vehicles to decline substantially before selling those vehicles to customers.

Yang lowered the odometer readings by replacing instrument clusters. The instrument cluster is the set of instrumentation typically found under the dash of a vehicle that includes all the gauges, including the odometer. On more than fifty vehicles, according to the government, Yang replaced the original instrument clusters with units that had substantially lower mileage readings on the odometers. The odometer readings declined by an average of approximately 93,000 miles.

During the trial, Yang testified that instrument clusters were replaced for legitimate reasons (for example, to replace a broken gauge or light bulb). At sentencing, Judge Griesbach rejected this explanation, citing, among other things, the pattern of downward changes in mileage as well as expert testimony that the failure rate for instrument clusters on the types of vehicles sold by Yang is actually very low.

In sentencing Yang to a term of imprisonment, Judge Griesbach noted the importance of following regulations pertaining to odometer changes and the need to deter others from engaging in odometer tampering.

Consumers who wish to avoid becoming victims of odometer tampering or odometer fraud may find additional information about these topics at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s website (<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/consumer/rights/odometer.htm>).

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Jonathan H. Koenig and Keith Alexander. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation investigated the case.

For Additional Information please contact Assistant United State Attorneys Jonathan H. Koenig or Keith Alexander at (414) 297-1700.

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